

1 Transcript of the interview of Stanford University School of Education
2 Professor Linda Darling-Hammond by TOPed's John Fensterwald
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6 **JF:** Today, we're very lucky to have Linda Darling-Hammond, professor of education at
7 Stanford University, and also vice chair of the California Commission on Teacher
8 Credentialing. I know you're a very busy woman, Linda. So why did you take the job?
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10 **LDH:** Well, the governor asked, number one. And I've spent a lot of my career talking about
11 how to improve teacher education and teacher development. So sometimes you feel like
12 you have to put your effort where your mouth is. You know, you kind of have to be
13 willing to follow through on the work that you've done. And this is the place—the
14 California Teacher Credentialing Commission *is* the place—that the rules are set for how
15 people are prepared, both teachers and school leaders, and how they make their way into
16 the beginning of the profession. I think it's a critical part of building a good system.
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18 **JF:** Right. And you were just elected vice chair just last week. And so what are your goals?
19 And how do you hope to use your position as vice chair to accomplish that?
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21 **LDH:** The goals of the commission are the goals that the chair and vice chair promote and take
22 on; and those are really to build a system which very thoughtfully enables people to get
23 what they need to know and be able to do in order to be successful in the class room as
24 teachers and leaders.
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26 Right now, the commission is coming out of an era where it needs to retool its capacity to
27 manage things like disciplinary hearings, and so on. People who get in trouble have to go
28 through sort of a malpractice kind of hearing. But the more-important aspect of the
29 system-building is really how people are prepared.
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31 So what do we need to do in California? We have a lot of good programs of preparation.
32 We've built internship models. We've built pre-service models. I think that there's
33 probably agreement that some of those are among the best in the country, both in the
34 traditional pre-service routes and in the internships routes. And some of them are much
35 weaker. And we need to have a quality lever. We need to really identify what the best
36 programs are doing, and enable everyone else to meet, move up to, that standard.
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38 **JF:** Best programs in California or nationally?
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40 **LDH:** We should bring a national and an international perspective to it, you know. I happen to
41 have spent a lot of time looking at systems in Finland and Singapore and Korea and other

high-achieving countries. They actually have come here to study some of our programs, which are very good

JF: Like what in California?

LDH: Stanford is one that they've come to visit. The University of California at Berkeley has an excellent program that I know some of those countries have looked at. But we also have great programs at — some of the programs at — Cal State Northridge, Long Beach, UCLA. I mean I could go on. There are many, many places that have quite extraordinarily good programs.

JF: What have you learned from abroad that needs to be applied?

LDH: Number one, you have to have a uniform common standard. That is, in Finland, what drove them to the top of the international rankings was overhauling *all* of the teacher-education programs in the country. There only happen to be 11 in Finland. It's a little easier, but still, the point was that everyone had to meet common standards. And so *every* teacher gets a high-quality training, and is ready to be an excellent teacher.

We have some great programs. We have some weak programs. We don't have that level of standardization. We need to get to that. One of the other things about it is *very* extensive clinical preparation. In California, you can come into teaching with as little as three weeks of student teaching, or as much as a full year. In Finland, you will come in with a two-year master's degree. You will have had a full year practicing in the classroom under master teachers who are specifically identified *because* they are excellent teachers, and those are the ones who get to train the next teachers, and to get to emulate that.

You learn about research. You *do* research. You put research into practice. And there are teaching schools attached to each university that are places that are specifically designed for training new teachers like a teaching hospital would be for medicine.

JF: So the CTC can sort of require a certain amount of clinical time as part of its program? Is that what this is?

LDH: It theoretically could. I don't know whether that's a direction that the CTC will go. One direction it is *likely* to go, and there have been discussions about this, is that California is a pioneer in the nation around the creation of a teacher-performance assessment.

Every teacher in California has to demonstrate that they're ready to be licensed by completing a real performance assessment of teaching. There are three models that they can go through, and these require that they demonstrate that they can plan a curriculum, that they can adapt that curriculum for English learners, special-education students; that

85 they can be videotaped teaching; that they collect evidence of student learning and can
86 demonstrate how their students are learning, and analyze what to do next. All the things
87 you expect a teacher to be able to do.
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89 Well, guess what? When you require that everybody do that, and that programs look at
90 how their candidates have done, it generates a lot of change, because programs go, “Oh,
91 my goodness! I’ve never been asked to see whether the proof is in the pudding, you
92 know. What the pudding looks like.”
93

94 And so that’s causing *quite* a bit of *very* productive, very high-quality innovation and
95 reform. And one of the things we *can* do is invest in that. Make sure that that is
96 consistently scored. That we are using the data from that to improve programs, to accredit
97 programs, to raise the ante for preparation. And we could do the same kind of thing for
98 administrator preparation.
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100 So I think there will be a lot of [looking] at those kinds of strategies. There will be a hard
101 look at where do we need to make stronger investments to improve the quality of
102 preparation. There will be a hard look at issues like how do we get more special-
103 education teachers who are well-prepared. More teachers who have bilingual and English
104 as a second language preparation, and teachers in mathematics and physical science.
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106 **JF:** You mentioned you have weak programs and strong programs. How do we know? And
107 how will we measure [them]? Is it strictly through the assessments that you talked about
108 on an individual student basis? Or do we have other measures of whether a CSU or
109 Stanford or Berkeley is actually a good or a weak program?
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111 **LDH:** There’s a lot of things you can look at, and, increasingly, accreditation is requiring
112 programs to give some outcome evidence of what happens as a result of their efforts.
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114 Traditionally, a lot of programs will survey their graduates and say, you know, “How
115 well prepared did you feel in this, this, and this area?”
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117 They’ll sometimes collect evidence from employers. “How well-prepared were these
118 people when they got to your school?”
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120 They’ll look at ratings of effectiveness. We can now look at these teacher-performance
121 assessments and say, “What proportion of candidates from this program were able to
122 demonstrate that they could meet this standard?”
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124 **JF:** ... Is that important, to go back and look at the *student* results of teachers and then
125 correlate that with the credentialing institution? Or is that not a direction that you think
126 we should go?
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LDH: We're not going to have an easy time doing that in the short run, because the data systems aren't there. I think that looking at the effects of large-scale programs or interventions on student-achievement gains makes a lot of sense. Many people do that kind of study, value-added study.

We have seen that looking at the student results for individual teachers is much more problematic, much more error-prone, very unstable, you know, et cetera. So it's harder to make generalizations for an individual teacher or for a small number of teachers; but I think where we can aggregate sufficient data, and where we can look across a number of graduates over time, you *can* get some, you know, potentially-useful information about what candidates are able to do, as long as one is clear that you also have to take into account where are they teaching, what are the contexts, what kind of supports do they have, and try to take that into account.

JF: All kinds of variations.

LDH: Because any teacher will be more effective if they have a class size of 20 than a class size of 50. If they have materials and equipment and books and computers than if they are scrounging around looking for those. So we have to be cautious not to draw inferences about teachers that are actually about the context in which they teach, but we can carefully, with large-scale studies, learn some important things.

JF: You've been an advocate of fellowship programs such as, I believe, one in Boston. Will we ever get to the point where we will have that in California, in which potential teachers take a year under a mentorship, or whatever?

LDH: You know, it's interesting. Those — those programs — many of them are called “residency models” in Boston, Denver, some other places — are not unlike what many of the programs in California already *do*; because we've had a post-baccalaureate year-long teacher-education model for a long time, whereas most of the country has had undergraduate teacher education. And some of our programs — and I mentioned earlier some of the models, UCLA, Stanford, Berkeley, some others — *do* put someone *in* the classroom for a full year with an expert, veteran teacher while they're taking their courses and earning a master's degree, which is what those residencies do.

So we do have some aspects of that operating in the state, and we also have places like Los Angeles and San Francisco that have started residency programs in collaboration with a specific district, which has the added advantage for that district of them being able to say, “We need to grow a pathway of math and science teachers, special-education teachers, ESL teachers. And we're gonna work with universities to grow that pathway. We're gonna identify our best teachers and see if we can train these new teachers under the wing of those teachers while they take their college coursework.”

169 And so we *are* seeing residencies starting in California, feeding the needs of urban
170 districts, and I think that that will be a very exciting part of the training ground in the
171 future.

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173 JF: If there is extra money, it should be focused on urban districts for low-income, lower-
174 performing schools, do you think?

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176 LDH: I think that that's one place where we have great needs. And there are also some poor
177 rural communities where the needs are also similar, and there are some residency models
178 starting up in rural areas, as well.

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180 The key is that we have shortages. We don't have a shortage of teachers overall. We all
181 know that teachers are getting laid off. But we continue to have places which, because of
182 the unequal funding system, offer lower salaries, and have poorer working conditions,
183 that are also serving very high-need populations of students, that have had high turnover,
184 and struggle to find well-prepared math / science teachers, special-education teachers,
185 and so on. And rather than lower the standards, to take anybody who breathes – that's the
186 old fog test that they used to do for teachers, if you fog up the mirror, you get hired.
187 Rather than lowering the standards, we want to maintain the standards, and train people
188 really well for *that* kind of work, because it's different teaching in, Bayview-Hunter's
189 Point than it is teaching in Palo Alto. You need to know more. You need to have a range
190 of skills. So figuring out how to get the opportunity for people to learn from the best, in
191 that context, is going to make them more effective.

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193 JF: So one last question that's broader in scope, and so how do we make the profession more
194 attractive to bring the top students in universities across the country to pursue teaching as
195 a career? And that's a broad question. Perhaps as it relates to the commission: Is there
196 anything that CTC can do, to do that?

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198 LDH: I think there are several elements of that, and some part of it can be played by an
199 organization like CTC. One piece of it, of course, is you have to reasonable salaries. You
200 know, they may not be the top of the salary chain, but they should allow teachers to earn
201 enough to be able to send their *own* kids to college, right?

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203 Right now, in this country, the average teacher earns about 60 percent of the average
204 college graduate. In places like Finland, Singapore, Korea, they're earning close to 100
205 percent of what other college graduates earn. And so we are gonna have to think about
206 how to raise and equalize salaries so that, you know, you can attract and keep people.

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208 But it's not the *most* important thing for keeping people. Working conditions, autonomy,
209 excitement in the job, having a job where you get to use what you've learned, you get to
210 be creative, you get to have the conditions in which kids are well-enough supported that
211 you can be successful – those things matter more. And so I think we need to look to the

212 various parts of the state as a whole, the policy levers, the administrative levers, to do
213 that.
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215 The piece that the CTC can contribute is twofold. Number one, it can outline and define
216 the kinds of programs that are high quality, intellectually rigorous, and exciting – because
217 teaching is *very* exciting work – that high-ability people will find attractive, interesting,
218 engaging, and useful. So that's number one.
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220 The other thing we know is that when people are well-prepared, they stay in the
221 profession longer. So if we get programs that people *want* to be in because they are
222 intellectually exciting, and help them be successful with kids, they will also stay.
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224 The other things that CTC can do is propose legislation, and has in the past outlined ways
225 that the legislature can invest in the kinds of service scholarships and fellowships that
226 will allow people to afford to get well-prepared. I think we need that, as well.
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228 **JF:** Good. Well, Linda Darling-Hammond, thank you very much for coming and speaking
229 with us today, and we'll be following you, and in a couple years, to see what happens
230 with the commission.
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